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THE MESSAGE AND MISSION OF QUAKERISM

By WILLIAM C. BRAITHWAITE and
HENRY T. HODGKIN, M.A., M.B.

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By
WILLIAM C. BRAITHWAITE
and
HENRY T. HODGKIN, M.A., M.B.

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FOREWORD

The two addresses which compose this book were delivered at the Five Years Meeting of the Society of Friends held in Indianapolis, Indiana, from October 15th to 22nd, 1912. They were listened to with profound interest and appreciation, and were approved by a Minute which also ordered their publication, in order that the wider group of Friends, and all others who are interested in the message and mission of a religion of this type, might have the opportunity to read them. It is a plain duty of any religious body to put its truths into circulation, and to reinterpret again and again the vital principles by which its members live and work. Here in this little book will be found in convenient form a fresh and illuminating expression of the truths, principles and ideals of present-day Quakerism and some of the practical problems confronting the modern world which the application of these truths, principles

and ideals might solve. The reader will discover that the writers live in the Twentieth Century and that they are "speaking to the condition" of the age.

RUFUS M. JONES.

Haverford, Pennsylvania
12th mo. 9th, 1912

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PART I

THE ESSENTIALS OF QUAKERISM

BY WILLIAM C. BRAITHWAITE

Introductory Words

It is with great diffidence that we from England venture to speak to the American Yearly Meetings. Our circumstances and the problems we have to face are often so different that it would be presumptuous in us to feel that we had advice on matters of detail that would deserve very great attention from you. But when it comes to our common history and to the common inheritance we have in the principles and faith of the Society of Friends, we may speak freely.

We represent the main body of those who call themselves "Friends." The Yearly Meetings from which we come connect by continuous history with the first Quaker Churches of two hundred and fifty years

ago. Of course when we compare ourselves as we are now, with the first Friends, we find great differences, as great undoubtedly as exist between the New Englander of to-day and the Pilgrim Fathers. We should find much to astonish if we could peep in at one of those first London meetings held in the summer of the year 1655 at the Bull and Mouth, the great "tavern-chapel" in Aldersgate, in which you could then crowd a thousand people standing. I fancy these meetings may have been rather like some of your pioneer meetings in the West. But the pioneers of the London work, Howgill and Burrough, would find modern Quakerism, whether in England or in the Middle West, a strange thing. It takes a wise man to recognize his own great-great-great-great grandchildren. They have an inheritance that connects them up with their ancestor, but their environment is so different that on the surface they seem to have been changed into another type of man. At bottom, however, we shall find that the inherited type will continue.

"For never Pilgrims' offshoot scapes control
Of those old instincts that have shaped his soul."
(LOWELL, "*Fitz Adam's Story.*")

In other words, the inner life of a religious movement remains, although the expression of that life will greatly vary under changing conditions of time and place.

I.

In order to get at the essentials of Quakerism, we do well to go back to the beginnings, to those first years of nascent energy which carried the Quaker message through the English-speaking world. Whenever a new truth starts to life, it is intensely dynamic and vital; it masters every opposing circumstance; it flings itself victoriously against a stubborn world. It is a thing of life and movement, and I believe it will be found that a live truth in motion is the mightiest of all forces. But, a generation later, unless the vital forces have been cherished, the emphasis comes to be laid on establishment rather than movement, and when a thing gets established it usually ceases to move; the emphasis comes to

be laid on dogma instead of truth, on organization instead of life, and the day of glory and power passes away. That was the case with Quakerism.

Two things, I believe, leave a vivid impression upon any student of the early Quaker movement. They can be stated quite simply, but they make up together the fundamentals of Quakerism to which everything else belongs as a natural consequence.

In the first place we find ourselves among men and women of an intense sincerity, who are seeking truth with all the energy of their faith, all the energy of their nature, and, in the second place, we become aware that this earnest search after the Kingdom of God and its righteousness was rewarded with a great finding, a rich personal experience in their lives, of the living presence of Jesus Christ, their Savior.

We know now that communities who called themselves "Seekers" were specially receptive of the Quaker message, and became the main strength of the new movement. In that Puritan age, filled with

religious zeal, there were many honest-hearted men craving after something more real than the mere outward profession of religion. They were not satisfied with the triumphant religion of the time, which put strong emphasis, and rightly put strong emphasis, on belief in the great historical facts of Christianity, but had little or no conception of Christ's living presence in the world to-day. And when Fox told these honest-hearted Seekers that he knew in his own experience that Jesus Christ was come to teach His people Himself, their souls leapt up to welcome the Divine Guest. Fox himself was a man of intense sincerity, who found actually in his own spirit the place where the seed of Divine life was springing up, the place where the voice of a Divine teacher was being uttered, the place that was being inhabited by a Divine and glorious presence. He could tell the great company of Seekers who met at Firbank Fell in Westmorland on that memorable afternoon in June, 1652, not only of an historical Christ, but of a living Savior, their Teacher to instruct them,

their Governor to direct them, their Shepherd to feed them, their Bishop to oversee them, their Prophet to open Divine mysteries to them. I am giving you the points of his three-hour sermon on that occasion. Their bodies, he said, were intended to be temples for Jesus Christ to dwell in. They were to be brought off from the temples, tithes, priests and rudiments of the world. They were to come to the Spirit of God in themselves and to Christ the Substance.

The new message opened out a new way of life to men who were sincere enough to go through with it and to live it out. It carried with it a radical transformation or rather transfiguration of life from the earthly into the Heavenly. I will give a passage in the quaint English of the time in which Edward Burrough, himself one of these Westmorland Seekers, describes the experience:

"In all things we found the Light which we were enlightened withal, and all mankind (which is Christ), to be alone and only sufficient to bring to Life and eternal

salvation. And so we ceased from the teachings of all men, and their words, and their worships and their temples, and all their baptisms and churches, and we met together often, and waited upon the Lord in pure silence, from our own words and all men's words, and hearkened to the voice of the Lord, and felt His word in our hearts to burn up and beat down all that was contrary to God, and we obeyed the Light of Christ in us, and took up the cross to all earthly glories, crowns and ways, and denied ourselves, our relations and all that stood in the way betwixt us and the Lord, and, while waiting upon the Lord in silence, as often we did for many hours together, we received often the pouring down of the Spirit upon us, and our hearts were made glad and our tongues loosed and our mouths opened, and we spake with new tongues, as the Lord gave us utterance, and as His Spirit led us, which was poured down upon us, on sons and daughters, and the glory of the Father was revealed. And then began we to sing praises to the Lord God Almighty and to the Lamb

forever, who had redeemed us to God, and brought us out of the captivity and bondage of the world, and put an end to sin and death,—and all this was by and through and in the Light of Christ within us."*

Now, it is not my purpose to examine this experience from the side either of psychology or dogmatic theology. There are psychologists and theologians, too, with whom I could not venture to compare myself, but it is enough to take the great experience simply as historical fact. There can be no question that two hundred and fifty years ago actual living intercourse with the Divine, such as Burrough describes, gathered the first Friends into their wonderful fellowship. It lifted them into an order of life which set them in a place of vision and power and joy. They saw the things of time in the light of eternity. They knew what it was to overcome the world, so that nothing could daunt their faith. In the words of one of the finest of the first Friends, William Dewsbury, the very prisons became palaces

*Burrough, Preface to "Great Mystery."

to them and the bolts and locks jewels. The Kingdom of Heaven was theirs, not indeed bringing the prizes of worldly ambition, but filling life with something richer, righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. And all this was the reward and the result of a single-hearted sincerity,—full righteousness of heart, full humility of soul, full searching after truth, full opening of the heart to the incoming of the Divine life. It had been won, as men count, at a great price. It had meant a breach with the current fashions of life and forms of religion; it had meant a daring following of fresh truth through all its untried consequences; it had meant suffering and loss; it had meant the daily crossing of the carnal mind. It had meant all these things, yes, but it had meant also the incoming of the Life of Christ, bringing men into a new fellowship with one another and with God.

We have to admit that in the first tide of this wonderful experience there were some serious extravagances of thought and conduct. It would be strange, I suppose,

if newly opened eyes did not sometimes see men as trees walking. You get these extravagances when a fresh faculty of the soul is awaking to its powers. But the main phenomenon of Quakerism is the heightened personality which undoubtedly came to the Children of the Light. They were men and women to "shake their country in their profession for ten miles round," as some of our Friends have done in the Western states. Their very look carried with it the sentence of honor or shame. Their words had a challenging power, challenging men's consciences, forcing them to face the issues of good and evil, shattering self-complacency and self-righteousness. The Quaker was an impregnable man, his principles were held with an extraordinary tenacity. He stood not on a sandy foundation of notions, but on a rock of experience, and thus founded the man was sure and steadfast. The message of a present living Christ within the heart and a present Kingdom of God awaiting those who would receive it burned in the heart of these first Friends. It burned

in their hearts as a gospel for all men. It is a great mistake to suppose that the Quaker Church was founded as a sect. It had nothing sectarian about it. It had a great message of vital spiritual experience to give to the whole world. These first Friends were evangelists of vital Christianity.

They began as our evangelists to-day begin, by warning men to repent. George Fox went up Wensleydale calling on men to repent, for the day of the Lord was at hand, and proclaiming the Kingdom of Christ at the door of men's hearts, for them to take or reject. That is the spirit of this early Quakerism, and it surely takes us back to the spirit of the prophets and of primitive Christianity.

II.

The centering of life on the realities of inward intercourse with God is the great mark of the prophetic and apostolic type of religion and is in sharp contrast with religion of the priestly or institutional type. The prophet was a man who knew

what it was to have converse with Jehovah and sure knowledge of His will. He became a Seer, a man of insight and foresight, aware of the true values of things, the true values as weighed in the balance of the sanctuary. He became thereby a great social and moral reformer. His ideal was of a time when all would be prophets—when "your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions." And we may remember that this ideal is recognized on the day of Pentecost as the natural first-fruits of the Spirit. If it had been realized the Church would have been a school of prophets from generation to generation. Unfortunately the Church has more often stifled the seer and glorified the priest.

As I understand it, it is the specific mission of Quakerism to propagate a Christianity of this prophetic, apostolic type, a Christianity in which the Church is a living fellowship of disciples at work for the social and moral ends of the Kingdom of God. But the Church is not simply, in the

Quaker conception, a fellowship of disciples at work for the Kingdom of God; it is such a fellowship *plus* Jesus Christ Himself, in whose Spirit, the Spirit which unites them one to another and to Him, they become together "one flock, one Shepherd."

Fellowships, made up of groups of men and women who are with Christ, redeemed by Him, learning from Him, following Him, helping in His work, looking out on life with something of His devotion to the will of God and His passion to seek and save the lost—such are the true Quaker Churches. It is worth while to analyze the conception a little. The Church, we say, is a living fellowship—not in the first place an organization, but in the first place an organism—not an institution, but a body, built up of many cells, many individuals, just as the body has cells that grow and change and perform their several functions under the direction of an all-pervading, all-embracing life. That is what a living fellowship means. This life received through direct contact with the Divine life is the one essential of the Christian Church. It is the business

of the Church to see that it is fostered in every possible way, so that the body may freely grow under its influence and freely express the life in all forms of worthy living.

Historically, Quakerism is the product of this vital experience and while we gladly recognize that the experience is shared by us with many other branches of the Christian Church, it remains true that no other religious community so deliberately and emphatically bases its individual and corporate life upon this supreme fact of the soul's immediate contact with God.

Our special position among the churches is sometimes stated—not by the Five Years' Meeting—in a series of desolating negatives. We do not practice water baptism, nor partake of the outward elements of the Lord's Supper, we are against war and oaths and priestcraft, our meetings are held on a basis of silence, and so on—all negatives. But we were gathered as a people out of the world through the force of dynamic positives. We withstand priestcraft because every disciple is ordained for

service. As George Fox said, every man hath an office and is serviceable. We witness against oaths, because we uphold a single standard of truth speaking, and against distinctions of dress and address, because all men are equal in the sight of God; we oppose war because the armor of the children of light is the armor of righteousness, and disuse the outward form of baptism because the all-important thing is not the form but the inward repentance and cleansing by the blood of Christ. We cannot narrow down the experience of communion with our Lord to special ceremonials and places and ministrants, when we hold that Jesus offers Himself as the Bread of Life to His people day by day—in the home, in the factory, at business, in all our common work and in all our loftiest worship—the whole of life may be a sacrament of communion with Jesus Christ.

It is as a "religion of life" that Quakerism will be presented in the future and is being presented now.

Its distinguishing note will be its resolve

to bring all this human life of ours under the transforming power of spiritual life. It will stand out against all divisions and compartments that separate the sacred from the secular, the sanctuary from the outward world of nature, the sacrament from the day's common work, the clergy from the laity.

It will tell of a Christian experience that makes all life sacred and all days holy, all nature a sanctuary, all work a sacrament, and gives to every man and woman in the body fit place and service. Its concern will be to multiply men and women who will have a message of power because they are themselves living in the power of God, who will spread the light because they are themselves the children of light. It will claim the whole of a man's life, and the whole of life, individual, social, national, international, for the dominion of the will of God.

III.

So then the question comes: How can we foster this life? How can the Church

continue, through a succession of generations and amid manifold changes of circumstance and thought, not merely its name and organization, its tradition of the fathers and its orthodoxy of language, but a living body of Christ, which shall embody Him, as He would make Himself known to each age?

That is the supreme question. Unless the Church does that, it misrepresents its Lord and hinders the coming of His Kingdom.

Everything must be thought of in terms of vital relation if we are to see our way to an answer. We are dealing with life, and it is life, a unity of life, that connects the individual Christian with his Savior and with his fellow-Christians.

I know vital relations are costly things; it is comparatively easy to preach and profess; it is not easy to give ourselves. But vital relations are abundantly fruitful, and that supreme giving of life which we associate with the sacrifice of Jesus Christ is, we know, the most fruitful vital relation that has ever been exhibited in history.

"He, the Son of man, gave his life a ransom for many"—for the whole world.

Dr. Hort has finely said:

"In the times when Christianity owed nothing to custom and tradition, and when all the ways of ordinary society tended to draw men away from it, what drew them to it and held them to it, despite all persecution, was the power of its life. . . . Life calling to life was the one victorious power which mastered men and women of all conditions and all grades of culture."*

We cannot commend the Kingdom of God to the world through institutions that are starched and stiff, but only by the living, warm, expansive touch of human hearts reaching out in fellowship to others.

Men substitute tradition for the living experience of the love of God. They talk and think as though walking with God was attained by walking in the footsteps of men who walked with God. There has been a great deal of that in the Quaker Church.

They substitute authority for leadership,

* "The Way, The Truth, The Life," p. 183.

the authority of the men of the past for the inspiration of men who have vision and first-hand experience of truth to-day. They substitute conventional methods—we have had a great deal of that, too—for the natural arrangements which a living fellowship of disciples would make and modify from time to time and place to place. They substitute a cold organization for a warm fellowship, an outward profession for an inward experience, priestly agency for personal responsibility, dogmatic teaching for education, almsgiving for personal social service, sectarian ends for the great purposes of the Kingdom of God.

There is no end to the cheap substitutes offered for the use of the Church. Almost all of them are methods for running the Christian Society with the minimum of spiritual energy, seeing how little spiritual life you can manage with, whereas our aim ought to be to generate and use the maximum in the illimitable service of the Kingdom of God.

A religion of life must devote itself to vital processes and vital relations. These

are the things that concern our truest welfare. Take the chief:—loyal discipleship, inspired leadership, warm fellowship, loving service, steady spiritual growth; every one of them vital processes. Look at them in order just sufficiently to get them well in mind.

Jesus Christ, so far as we know, wrote nothing, He organized no religious society, He formulated no creed, but what He did was to gather around Himself a band of disciples, men and women, who received His spirit, and in turn would bring others into touch with the life which had redeemed them. His life, springing up in the lives of men, was to be fundamentally that which should regenerate the world.

The act of discipleship was following Jesus. It began with personal adherence to the Lord, and it continued through personal communion with Him. In art and in learning we know how stimulating the daily contact of teacher and disciple proves to be—the disciple's spirit kindled by the enkindled spirit of his teacher, the coming together of teacher and scholars

into a common life and a common purpose. That is why the colleges of American Quakerism have been such great forces. Still greater, vastly greater, is the discipleship which is ours in the School of Christ. It calls for the fullest dedication, the closest following, the daily taking of the cross, but it gives us Him who is the Way, the Truth and the Life.

Discipleship then is the first vital relation that must be always energizing the Church, but next in order comes inspired leadership.

The great initial success of Quakerism was due, beyond all else, so far as human means went, to the traveling "Publishers of Truth," as they called themselves, who carried their burning message far and wide; they were like rich life-blood circulating freely through the body. They were for the most part men and women of competent Bible knowledge and religious training, men with intense sincerity, with a great experience, who were talking about Christ because they knew Him. They went out on a devoted service, which no privations or persecutions could daunt, and many of

them were young men in the prime of their ardor and strength, who would follow the movings of life rather than the counsels of prudence—and we want those in the Church. The Church must be prepared to take a few risks with its young men. After all, the hearts of the young are burning for a crusade.

In the days of persecution which came upon the Quaker Church there was a great mortality among these leaders and unfortunately the supply of new leaders was small, indeed, ever since that glorious morning of Quakerism, the equipment of the Quaker Church with inspired leaders has been a pressing problem. It is our business to raise up not priests but prophets, Christian men and women of trained intelligence and wide outlook, who know God and have a sure insight into the great social and spiritual needs of humanity, whose lives have been redeemed, whose hearts have been touched with the live coal from off the altar. There is no place in vital religion for the vested interests of a clerical caste, nor the dead hand of tradition, nor the

compulsion of conscience by the authority of the expert; but there is every need for a leadership, which continues the past in a living experience and educates and inspires and illuminates. A democracy requires leadership, not the leadership of authority, but what we may call, to use the constitution of the Five Years Meeting, an *advisory* leadership, moving along channels of inspiration and personal influence. "For lack of vision the people perish."

The third great vital relation that the Church has to be fostering is warm fellowship. A few degrees of temperature may alter a climate and introduce wonderful possibilities of new life. Change the climate and you change the kinds of growth which may come into the world. It is very much the same with the Church. I remember a story of a little girl who was taken into a cold church one winter's day. She got in at one end and could scarcely hear what the preacher was talking about. After church she went home and her mother asked her: "Nellie, what was the text to-day?" She answered, "I couldn't hear

it very well, but I think it was 'Many are cold but few frozen.' "

I think congregations have sometimes preached that sermon. It is oftener preached by the congregation than by the minister.

Quakerism at times has suffered from a frigidity of climate which has repressed and repelled. In the first centuries Christianity became a great power, because it was a great brotherhood. Surely we need to warm up our church organization so that it becomes quickened into a living fellowship. We want a Christianity with the brotherliness left in and the starch taken out. I remember seeing an advertisement, "Catlow's preserves, boiled in silver pans." What it meant was this: you got the sugar, you got the fruit, and you got nothing else. That is what we want in our Christianity. We want the sweetness and we want the fruitfulness. We don't want much else. We don't want frigidity, we don't want starch.

Group life with a strong fellowship about it has always been a Quaker characteristic.

In the early days it was groups of Seekers who embraced the message of Fox, and in England we still find Friends settled in groups over the country. I notice, in the expansion of Quakerism in the far West, that it is colonies of Friends you get. You cannot have a diffused Quakerism diffused over the whole State of Nebraska or California, but you can have a few groups of Friends at particular points. But group life means a great deal more than the collection of persons within the four walls of a particular building. It means a life in community and comradeship, because the members are joined together actually and vitally in a common Lord and a common discipleship. It means, as with the limbs of the body, that the gifts and activities of each are freely used for the service of the whole. It means that each shares in and contributes to the larger life of the whole.

Then there is the need for loving service. A Church is not an end in itself, not a club where we sit at ease in Zion; it is a means to an end. It ought to be, in the phrase

of our early Friends, a "camp of the Lord." It needs to have the purposes of the Kingdom of God ringing in its ears all the time. It needs to be vowed to the great redemptive work of seeking and saving the lost. It will be rightly judged by its output of service for the Kingdom of God. I fancy that the weakness of modern Christianity is very similar to the besetting weakness of civilization. We grasp our privileges and shirk our responsibilities. The healthy Church fixes each member with personal responsibility for using the life which he has received. It finds work for all to do. It knows that activity is the natural expression of life, and that the torpor of any part spells atrophy and death.

Last of my list is what I have called steady, spiritual growth. The vital relations which are the wealth of the Church not only bring about a unity of life with God and with one another, but produce that progressive development of personality that we call growth.

These are the questions we need to be asking ourselves all the time: Are our

church members bigger men and women inwardly than a year ago?

Are they stronger in faith, more radiant in hope, warmer in love?

Have their spiritual senses developed? Do they see more of truth, hear more readily the Divine voice, respond more quickly to the guidance of the Spirit?

Are their consciences alert, their loins girt, their hands eager for sacrifice and service?

Here surely is what we may call the intensive work of the Church, the making of men and women not after the pattern of the world, but after the pattern of Jesus Christ, who shall go forth in His power and spirit to serve the Kingdom of God.

Now, we might well enlarge on these five important vital processes—discipleship, leadership, fellowship, service and growth. But my purpose will have been served if I have said enough to bring home to you the fact that these are the things that matter, the things that are of vital importance in the Church. Methods and machinery, organization and Church discipline have a

value of their own, but only a subordinate value to these prime factors of health. If these lesser things are accepted as a substitute for the vital factors, the Church becomes weak. If they are allowed to limit the development of the life, the Church may become dwarfed and deadened. Their true function, the true function of organization and discipline and these other matters, is surely large enough—namely, to provide means with which and through which the life can readily work.

IV.

In vital Quakerism then, the form has continually to be subordinated to the life. The life must be allowed free expression from time to time and place to place according to the varying needs and circumstances. In a word, the form must be kept plastic. This should be as much a fundamental of religious biology as it is of physiology.

The physiologist tells us that living matter is always soft and jelly-like. It is matter in a jelly-like state, permitting of the free play of molecular interchanges, so that

it is called a "dynamical state of matter." That is the general statement about living matter which the physiologist has to make to us to-day. It is essential that it should be plastic, able to grow, able to change its shape from time to time. It is always changing its form, as may be seen in the colorless cells of the blood. It has been said, and said truly, that no one of us is the same person we were seven years ago, every little bit of us has been changed in the interval. Living matter does not grow like the crystal, by the addition of new matter on its surfaces. It grows by absorbing matter into its substance and transforming that into matter like itself.

It should surely be the same in the life of institutions. The form should be flexible so that the life may be continually growing and changing its form according to the great directing control which the life exerts upon the body, and you want ease and flexibility in organizations just as you do in clothes. If you do not have this, you will have a good deal of chafing and cramping. Sometimes, perhaps, a growing boy

will burst his waistcoat. It is a great mistake to try to fit the man to the clothes when we ought to be fitting the clothes to the man, but it is a mistake that the Quaker Church has frequently made.

In Church life, our own included, the letter that killeth has again and again encroached upon the quickening spirit. Outward government and external rules have limited spiritual guidance. The desire to preserve the deposit of faith has crystalized vital experience into formularies and creeds. Emphasis has been laid upon life according to some stereotyped standard with a particular cut of collar and a particular mode of language and the life of the spirit has been quenched. But where the Spirit of God has been allowed freely to work upon the groups of disciples there has been a wonderful expansion of Christianity of a vital kind. This has been largely the case in the great foreign missionary work of the Churches, and in our Adult School movement in England, and in the pioneer work of Quakerism in the Western states.

If spiritual life is allowed to be the controlling, directing, molding force in Quakerism I have no fear for our future. We shall put in the forefront of our Church work the things that belong to life, the gathering of disciples, the raising of leaders and prophets, the maintenance of warm fellowship, the encouragement of service, the fostering of growth. This means that our Church arrangements will be so made and modified as to promote and secure the expression through them of the living forces which we have at our command. Those living forces are the spiritual force of the individual, which we call individual responsibility, the living force of the group, which we call fellowship, and above all, the Divine vitality, the incoming of the life of Jesus Christ, which we call spiritual power and spiritual guidance. Church arrangements, important in themselves, must be regarded as simply machinery through which forces can work, and the more efficiently the machinery allows the forces to work, the richer will be the service of the Church.

Let us consider the way in which these great forces get to work. I will take the meetings of the Church as my illustration. I am not one who says that the only kind of Friends' meeting is a meeting for worship. I believe that there are three or four types of Friends' meetings, in all of which we may have personal responsibility and group fellowship and the spiritual power and guidance of Jesus Christ.

Take first—it comes first—the evangelistic service, the meeting which seeks to do the primary work of the Church, by bringing the gospel of Jesus Christ to man, the living gospel of a living Savior. For such a meeting you want a man who feels his personal responsibility, who feels that he is speaking as the ambassador of Jesus Christ, called, chosen, faithful, with a freshly given message of truth on his lips, but you want also behind him to back him the fellowship and sympathy of a group of earnest souls, who are helping the meeting by their prayer and sympathy, and who perhaps themselves will have some share in the delivery of the message or in

the other outward service of the meeting. Moreover, the ingathering of disciples is a matter not only for evangelistic services, but for individual personal influence. Andrew findeth his own brother Simon: Philip findeth Nathanael. The men and women reached will need from the first to be surrounded with a new set of companions and to be brought into a new fellowship. They will need, not simply one service on a Sunday stimulating them to follow Jesus Christ, but the helpful comradeship of a group bringing them into a knowledge of what it means to live according to the will of God. In the redemptive work which our Adult Schools in England have done in hundreds of cases amongst men and women who had lost their own respect and were down in the gutter, the most fruitful work has been done by bringing men and women a new set of companions, in whose fellowship they may learn what the love of Jesus Christ means.

Take next the Friends' meeting with worship as its primary object. There you see clearly the three-fold play of these

same forces of personal responsibility, group-fellowship and spiritual guidance. Worship in fellowship is an intensely active thing. Its basis is not an inert stillness, but a waiting upon God in the unity of the spirit. The meetings of the first Friends were radiant with the joy of Christ's indwelling life. There were times of living fellowship and communion, warm with the central fires of Divine love, so delightful that sometimes they could hardly break them up and would stay far into the night.

The meeting for worship, more than any other agency, has given the world the Quaker type of character—the man or woman who meets life's problems simply and wisely, because he resolves them, not by passion or prejudice, nor mainly by the motions of human wisdom or policy, but by habitually consulting the Light of God which shines in the waiting soul.

The revival in its power of the Quaker meeting is an urgent need in the crowded hurry of this twentieth century, when men live so much upon the surface and so little in the deep places of their lives.

The world is too much with us, late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers.

In England, wherever you get earnest-hearted groups of persons together at a special gathering, as an Adult School week end, or a lecture school, or a conference, you find, whether they are Friends or not, that a Friends' meeting of a free, open kind, with prayer and praise and speech and silent worship all mingled under the guidance of the Spirit, comes as the great crown of all our fellowship and our intercourse, the benediction of all that has taken place, the perfectly natural means through which the common fellowship and purpose are lifted into communion with the life of God. We hardly sufficiently understand the great value in deepening character and consolidating fellowship of meetings of this kind, where there is a common purpose.

The poverty of many Friends' meetings for worship has lain, I think, in the poverty of common purpose in the congregation. Where there is a common purpose, a sincere waiting upon the Lord in fellowship, their value is very great.

It is the place for withdrawing awhile from the things of outward sense and exercising the faculties of spiritual sense; the place where to the awakened soul the vision of truth may be seen, the Word of the Lord may be heard, the guidings of His hand may be felt; the place where the heart may become aware of its waywardness and want and may gain strength to repent and come to Christ and choose the narrow road of life and dedicated service; the place where many have been able to say, with Isaac Penington, "I have met with my God, I have met with my Savior, and He hath not been present with me without His salvation, but I have felt the healings drop upon my soul from under His wings." But it is also the place where the worship we render and the life we receive are parts of a fellowship of worship and of life which comes to the meeting as a whole and finds its natural expression through the lips of one and another as the Spirit touches them to utterance.

There is a third type of meeting, which we may call a teaching meeting, sometimes

a Bible class and sometimes a service in which teaching ministry is to the front. There, again, surely you get the same forces in operation. The most vital teaching meetings are those which best combine inspiration, personal influence and fellowship. In true educational work the character and the faculties of a group of scholars are being trained by vital contact with one another and with the teacher. The contact of life with life is going on all the time. My friend, Rufus M. Jones, is quite right in saying that the central weakness of the Friends in the past lay in their failure to appreciate the importance of the fullest education of human personality in mind and soul, and the attention that is now being given to education in the Society of Friends is of the highest value. We cannot overestimate the promise to American Quakerism and to English Quakerism of our great educational institutions.

V.

I have now sought to show that Quakerism at its best is always the product of

vital forces, and is always producing vital relations. I say "at its best"; that is the necessary qualification.

This brings me to my last point. What is needed besides the life of the Spirit, the life of Jesus Christ in the Church? Surely what we need is an earnest dedication on the part of those who are seeking to know Jesus Christ. God is a spirit, and they that worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.

In the early days of Quakerism men were athirst for the gospel of a living Christ. In the present day, side by side with much indifference and indolence there is a widespread craving for reality in religion and life.

Tremendous social problems confront men to-day, new hopes of higher life are coming to the mass of workers, new convictions and new duties are dawning on the world, and fresh questions are being raised in the domains of history, psychology and philosophy. We are probably living in the midst of as great a period of transition as that which formed the bridge between the Middle Ages and Modern Europe, and those alone

will find the fuller truth and lead men into it who will bear the travail and follow the trail of the Seekers of the Light. We want men who will get on the top of the situation, men in the spirit of George Fox. When he was overwhelmed by the confusion of the year of anarchy that preceded the Restoration of 1660, he lay in great exercise of spirit at Reading for ten weeks and he writes:

"And so when I had travailed with the witness of God which they had quenched and gotten through with it and over all that hypocrisy . . . I came to have ease and the Light shined over all."*

It is the duty of the Church to discountenance all the manifold insincerities which disfigure our current Christianity, and to give free scope to honest-hearted love of truth. Sincerity is a plant that thrives under freedom and light, but withers under authority. The Church must use methods of illumination and education and fellowship as its means for cherishing true-hearted allegiance to the Lord. It will find these

* *Cambridge Journal*, i, 343.

methods more fruitful than methods of authority. Methods of authority may secure an artificial conformity, but it will always be at some expense of sincerity.

Jesus resolutely turned His back on the quickly won Kingdom of God, to be made up of those who gave Him external obedience; He set Himself to the slow achievement of an inward Kingdom, which should gather men into willing discipleship.

I desire an atmosphere of large-hearted charity and brotherly confidence, which will allow the Seeker after truth to live in the power of his experience, even if it is not a full experience, without being expected to live beyond his experience, an atmosphere which will allow him to make use of all the great aids which we have to-day in the search after truth—the great aids of scientific investigation, and what is still more important, in my opinion, the modern historical method which we are using to-day. We want to have as the motto of our Church the motto of one of our Yorkshire towns, "Weave truth with trust." We want a Church that believes in the nobility of

the truth; as this belief prevails amongst us, so shall we find a deeper reality in all our Church life, and a fresh release of energy and renewal of inspiration. For Quakerism is essentially *a religion of sincerity, answered by the incoming of the living Christ.*

VI.

What then shall groups of Friends, who have reached the vital experience of which I have been speaking, do with their experience? Surely there are great demands confronting them to-day, great duties and convictions to be entered upon, great Messianic hopes stirring in the world. This world of change is also a world that is fertile in the promise of richer life. There is the passionate craving after truth. Surely we are to stand for reality in religion and life. There is the fresh sense that is coming to men of the meaning and the worth of personality. Men are learning what the early Friends reached as a fact of inner experience, that their hearts could be places where the Divine side of life could spring up, and that here in this world of our own

personality, in personal responsibility, personal dedication, personal service, is the very heart of religion.

There is another Messianic hope: Woman's place in the universe in equal fellowship with man. Surely we can stand for that. We have expressed that in our Church life long before it came as a great hope to the mass of the people.

Then there is the hope of the establishment of the reign of law instead of brute force in international affairs. We stand and have always stood for that.

Again, there is the hope of the better ordering of society, removing the menace of destitution from the poor, securing an equality of opportunity for all, remedying the conditions that produce stunted lives, and giving those whom we call men the chance to become men in reality. The social regeneration of England and America has become to-day a living Messianic hope, making an insistent demand upon the Christian Church. Surely, with our witness to the practical application of Christianity to every part of life, we stand for

that. Above all, and finally, there is the great hope of Christ and His Kingdom, not for a few only but for the whole world. With our living experience of Jesus Christ, we must stand for that. Are we not again called to form a vanguard of progress towards the Kingdom of God? Our response to the call depends upon our personal consecration to the task. Behind the Kingdom of God as it is, behind the Kingdom of God as it is to be, there stand the actual groups of disciples, their personal experience, their personal devotion.

Joseph Sturge, the founder of the Adult School movement, once wrote: "It seems to be the will of Him who is infinite in wisdom, that light upon great subjects should first arise and be gradually spread through the faithfulness of individuals in acting up to their own convictions." This personal witness for truth, based upon a living experience of it, is the great duty laid upon each member of the Quaker Church. It carries with it the necessity for self-sacrifice. We know how the self-sacrifice of our Lord on the cross was the atonement of

the world, and the self-sacrifice of men and women, in the spirit of Jesus Christ, has still redemptive force.

We see before the Society of Friends, as it renews its spiritual communion and its warmth of fellowship, a great service for which it has been wonderfully prepared—a service for the revival of vital, prophetic religion and for its expression in righteousness of life—but the service will be fruitful through discipline and suffering; if it is to be redemptive of society it will cost much; those of us who have seen the vision of the future that may be will find our eyes filled with light and our hearts with peace, and our souls will know the springings-up of everlasting life and power, but at the same time our feet must be treading the way of the Cross with our Lord.

PART II

THE CONTRIBUTION OF FRIENDS TO THE LIFE AND WORK OF THE CHURCH

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Introductory Words

After a general introduction I shall refer briefly to some ways in which Friends in the past have made a contribution to the Church's life and work. I shall then set forth under seven heads the distinctive mission which I believe the Society of Friends has to our own generation both in Western lands and in the awakening nations of the East. In closing we may pause to consider what is required in order that this message may be believed in its fullness and power.

I.

During the time that I spent in China as a missionary, it was my privilege to be associated with the members of other Christian bodies who were working alongside of Friends in the Province of Szechwan. For a number of years there has been a large measure of co-operation in the missionary work in that province, in some directions of a more thorough character than in any other part of the mission field. The province was mapped out thirteen years ago between the various missions, and by this means overlapping has been avoided and great harmony has prevailed. To such an extent has this been the case that, at the Conference of West China Missions held in Chengtu in 1908, the ideal of "One Protestant Christian Church for West China" was unanimously adopted by a gathering representing the missions of six different denominations, and two interdenominational societies. It was also resolved "that whereas all Christian missions laboring in West China have for their

aim the establishment of the Kingdom of God, and whereas there is a sincere desire for more co-operation and a closer union of our Churches, this Conference recommends the free interchange of full members on a recommendation from the Pastor of the Church from which they come." This remarkable action on the part of the West China Missionary Conference compelled me to look into the problem suggested by the title of this address in an altogether new way. If we were really working for a single united Church, what was to be the contribution of our Society: had we in fact anything distinctive and vital to give, and in what way were we to give it? The still more remarkable gathering held at Edinburgh in 1910, and the contact which I have since had with members of other Christian bodies in following up the results of that Conference, have pressed the question home with renewed force.

To many it may seem that the ideal of a single organically united Christian Church is a wild and impracticable dream. To some it will appear as an altogether

undesirable object to set before ourselves. We are indeed perpetually reminded in a variety of ways of the inestimable gain which comes to the Kingdom of God through the wide differences of opinion and view-point represented by the existing sections of the Christian Church. If union spelt uniformity, I confess that I should be found amongst its strongest opponents. If, indeed, it stood for merging all differences and an emphasis upon nothing beyond the minimum upon which we are all agreed, I could not look forward with any satisfaction to such a prospect. To me, however, union stands for something far other. My ideal of it is represented by the following sentence from the report presented to the Edinburgh Conference on this subject: "They desire that . . . those who are at present separated should seek to be led by the Spirit of God into a unity in which all that is true and vital in the principles and practices of each may be preserved and reconciled. . . . Unity when it comes must be something richer, grander, more comprehensive than anything which

we can see at present. It is something into which and up to which we must grow, something of which and for which we must become worthy. We need to have sufficient faith in God to believe that He can bring us to something higher and more Christ-like than anything to which at present we see a way."*

It is not, however necessary for us to determine in our own minds what is the ideal towards which the Christian Church is moving, or ought to move, in regard to this particular problem. One thing is abundantly clear, and that is that, if our own generation is to receive and respond to the Christian message, every section of the Church must bring its best contribution. No one section will, in itself, contain the whole of truth. In this day of Foreign Missions we are enabled to see on the horizon the glorious ideal of the Kingdom of God into which each nation and each race shall contribute its own distinctive elements of moral strength and spiritual

*Report of World's Missionary Conference, vol. viii, pp. 137, 138.

illumination. Even so may we not conceive, as a preparation for this end, the delivery of a Christian message more comprehensive than any which has been delivered to the world since Apostolic days? If this message is to be delivered, either at home or abroad, there must be a larger sympathy and a better understanding between the various Christian communions. Each must seek to interpret its own message in terms intelligible to the others: each must make a patient endeavor to appreciate the strength and beauty of that which has been committed to other Christian communions with which it has perhaps hitherto been at war. Whether this will ultimately lead into an organic unity or not none of us can possibly say. Whether, indeed, we should work for organic unity or not will evoke large divergence of opinion. Whether or not we should cultivate the spirit of unity—the atmosphere in which the beautiful flower of unity will come to perfection—this is a question upon which there can surely be no divergence of view.

I approach this question as one who

dares to believe that Christianity is the future religion of mankind. I believe this because I see no other religious system in the least degree competent to take this place. I believe it because the closer linking of mankind by commercial and intellectual bonds appears to me as nothing less than a preparation for the linking together of the whole human race in one great spiritual kingdom. I believe it because I see in the Man Christ Jesus the One who alone can appeal to all ages and all races and all classes of men: who is in very truth the Son of Man. I believe it supremely because I see in Him the only begotten Son of God sent into the world for the redemption of mankind, and offering His life as the one supreme sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. It is with nothing short of a passionate longing that I desire that the Society of Friends may make its full contribution to the achievement of this glorious ideal. In the great purposes of God the full content of truth will, I feel assured, be some day discovered and followed by a redeemed humanity. For the

Society of Friends, which has already played a great part in leading men into the truth, I am ambitious that we may not, through any failure of spiritual perception or moral earnestness, lose the opportunity of giving what has been given to us. That which we have, we hold in trust for the Church and for the world.

On this occasion, it is not my purpose to enlarge upon the contribution of our Society to the *world.* In common with all the Christian Churches, we have a great message to deliver. Even as George Fox said in his day we are charged primarily with "the preaching of the Everlasting Gospel." The great essentials of this gospel—the Divine Sonship of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ: His great sacrifice for sin: His victory over it in His resurrection: the gift of His Holy Spirit—these are the things which bind us together with all sections of the Christian Church, and which give us, in common with them, a life-giving message to our own generation. I wish it to be clear that, in passing over these fundamental questions, it is not because I lightly esteem them;

but simply because I feel so sure that we here are united with one another and with all who truly call upon the name of Christ, and because I wish rather to emphasize and plead for a more deliberate and sympathetic attempt to bring the message of Quakerism to our own generation.

But I do this in no narrow sectarian spirit. It may be that the following recollection of a Quaker boyhood represents to some extent the attitude which many of us have held at one time in our lives. "I said 'thee' and 'thy' to everybody, and I would fully as soon have used profane words as have said 'you' or 'yours' to any person. I thought only 'Friends' went to heaven, and so I supposed that the use of 'thee' and 'thy' was one of the main things that determined whether one would be let in or not. Nobody ever told me anything like this and if I had asked anybody at home about it, I should have had my views corrected. But for a number of years this was my settled faith. I pitied the poor neighbors who would never be let in, and I wondered why everybody did not 'join

the Meeting' and learn to say 'thee' and 'thy.' I had one little Gentile friend whom I could not bear to have 'lost,' and I went faithfully to work and taught him 'the language,' which he always used with me till he was ten or twelve years old, when the strain of the world got too heavy upon the little fellow! I am quite sure no Israelite, in the days of Israel's prosperity, ever had a more certain conviction that he belonged to a peculiar people whom the Lord had chosen as His own than I had. There was for me an absolute break between 'us' and anybody else. This Phariseeism was never taught me nor encouraged directly by anybody; but I none the less had it. If I had anything in the world to glory over, it was that I was a Quaker."*

I have no doubt that we shall all wish to banish from our minds any lingering suspicion of such a spirit as is represented by these words. To us it must be clear that no one sect is the sole repository of truth, and that others may have more to

*"A Boy's Religion from Memory," by Rufus M. Jones, pp. 24, 25.

give than we; but this attitude is not inconsistent with a clear sense of what *is* entrusted to us and an intense desire to share it with all.

Again I want to make it clear, in referring to various elements of the Quaker contribution, that I am well aware that in respect of many of these questions there are many individuals belonging to other Christian denominations who hold the same views and exemplify in their lives the same moral qualities. I think, however, that I am right in saying that in each case Friends hold a distinctive position through the fact that they, as an organization, stand for these views of truth and, in some cases, exhibit them through that organization in a way which it is not possible for them to be exhibited in the lives of single individuals.

II.

When one looks back upon the past 250 years and attempts to estimate the value of Friends to the Christian life of England and America, there are certain outstanding features which at once arrest attention.

Amongst the chief contributions which the Society has been successful in making hitherto to the Christian life of England and America are the following:

1. At a time when religion was in danger of becoming, to a large extent, formal, ceremonial and external, the early Friends succeeded in calling the attention of their own generation to the necessity for a vital, inward experience. They undoubtedly helped many besides those who actually joined with them into a clearer understanding of the inwardness of the Christian gospel, and into a personal experience of the living and indwelling Christ.

2. The Reformation and post-Reformation period was marked by that intensity of religious conviction which so often leads to intolerance and religious bigotry. Even those who had suffered persecution themselves followed the very example one would have expected them to avoid as soon as the opportunity occurred. That our spiritual forefathers had an immense influence upon that age, in bringing about a greater spirit of religious toleration, cannot be

doubted by any who read carefully the religious history of that time.

3. From the day that William Penn entered into treaty with the Red Indian Chiefs till the day when John Woolman made his protest against Negro Slavery, and on till John Greenleaf Whittier thrilled the nation with the songs which called to love and brotherhood, Friends have consistently stood for an attitude of sympathetic understanding of other races. Nowhere perhaps has this been more publicly and more deservedly acknowledged than by the action of President Grant in handing over to Friends the management of certain reservations for Red Indians, a policy which he declared had proved "most satisfactory."

4. Even at the time when Quakerism ceased to be a powerful evangelical force, and when Friends seem to have lost something of their first love, the Society was producing men and women of outstanding Christian character, who were known to be no hypocrites; whose word was their bond; whose business integrity was prover-

bial and whose character for truthfulness and honesty was surely an outstanding contribution to the Christian life of the eighteenth century. This type of character has, I believe, been largely maintained till the present day.

5. And lastly, scarcely any great philanthropic movement has risen during the last 200 years which has not had the support of Friends; and notable cases could be quoted to show the way in which Friends have taken the lead in such matters. Especially at times when religious revival has taken on emotional forms, and when the emphasis has been thrown almost exclusively upon the subjective side, it has been of great benefit to the Church to have the association of practical philanthropy with the very Society which has always insisted on the necessity for an inward experience.

I refer to these few historic examples in order to illustrate the way in which I am approaching the question, and to show how a particular Christian Society has, for upwards of 250 years, been steadily

bringing its influence to bear upon the Christian life of two great nations. In looking back upon the past, we may truly thank God and take courage. Let there be no thought of arrogance in our minds; but rather of deep humility, as we proceed to look into the problems which confront us to-day, and consider in what direction our Society may contribute towards their solution.

III.

In whatever direction we look to-day, we see the danger of an invading materialism. By this I do not mean any philosophic position. In fact, I do not believe that what might be called philosophic materialism is gaining ground at the present time. It does seem to me, however, that a practical agnosticism is making itself felt in very many quarters. The vague sense that God is responsible for the Universe, that at one time some great Cause operated to bring it all into being and that, in some way, we are all still depending upon the benevolent activity of that Cause, is not

Christianity. The Christian Church is being invaded by this uncertainty with regard to God. There is a loosening, it seems to me, of that close grip upon the eternal verities which enables men perpetually to draw upon the resources of God, to throw themselves in the abandonment of faith upon a living Savior and to find that faith justified at every step of the way. Men do not like to set forth upon a path without knowing whither it leads. The prevailing scientific temper leads men to test everything many times, to trust nothing beyond the range of verifiable scientific facts. This breeds a spirit which only takes cognizance of the things which can be seen and felt and weighed and measured. Where is there room in this narrowed universe for the limitless activity of the God of Love?

When we turn our eyes to the non-Christian world, the danger becomes more startlingly apparent. Here are the "child races" filled with that sense of the mystery and awe which the little child, even in our materialistic modern world, still has. The savage thinks of God as infinitely near,

or at least he thinks that the spirits of the departed are. It needs no carefully stated argument to demonstrate the existence of an unknown world. It lies all about and around. He is reminded of it by the thunder and the lightning. And to him there comes our modern education explaining away all the beautiful or the dreadful mystery of life, and, before he knows what has happened, he is losing his sense of God. The old sanctions are loosened as the old fear is removed, and he has got helplessly adrift into the mid-stream of a barren rationalism.

What are we to do for him and what are we to do for the modern man in our midst? We shall not have to go very far to search for those who still find the remedy in an elaborate and beautiful religious ceremonial; who will tell us that it is foolish to build our religious conviction upon mere personal experience: that we are rather to turn back to the experience of the Christian Church. We are to observe its ordinances perfectly. There are to be stated seasons of prayer: there are to be stated means of grace:

and through these, whether you *feel* any better for it or not, you will be brought into line with the experience of the Catholic Church and become partakers of Heavenly grace. I am far from denying that beautiful forms of worship, that stated seasons of prayer, or that time-honored ritual may have a real place in the spiritual experience of very many. Doubtless, these things have been of value in bringing numbers of souls into the Kingdom of God, and will still be so. To me it seems, however, that they are fraught with great danger. Especially at the present time, when men intensely desire reality, they are apt to become impatient with the forms of a bygone age, however zealously they may be followed by some of their contemporaries. And, on the other hand, there are those who are too readily content with the outward and allow the mere forms of religion to salve the uneasy conscience. Was there, I wonder, ever a time when men needed more than they do to-day a clear summons into a life of spiritual reality and of personal intimate knowledge of God?

Can we summon them back as did our forefathers? Have we the message that they had? Can we say, as did Francis Howgill, "The Lord appeared daily to us to our astonishment, amazement and great admiration, insomuch that we often said one to another with great joy of heart, 'What! Is the Kingdom of God come to be with men?'" The message sent forth by the Edinburgh Conference to the whole Church of Christ called her to realize that "God is demanding of us all a new order of life. . . . that He is greater, more loving, nearer and more available for our help and comfort than any man has dreamed." If there was one thing which the Society of Friends was called into existence to proclaim, it was this very truth. Are we proclaiming it to-day? And, for the non-Christian world, how great is the danger of substituting one set of ceremonies for another. To those who have been in the habit of trusting to such barren rites as the burning of paper money, the washing in the Ganges and the sacred but often most unholy feasts, how easy it is to allow the

burning of incense or the rites of Baptism or the Holy Communion to take the same place in their thoughts and to be trusted for salvation or merit in the same way. In fact, one of our own missionaries in Ceylon was a man who had, for some years, worked in connection with another Society, and who had found that he was in constant difficulty because he was building up with one hand what he had to remove with the other. He came to the conclusion that, if he was to help men into a personal experience of Christ, he must take away entirely all possibility of trusting to outward rites, and preach to them the simple Quaker message. When the Friend missionaries in China met after the West China Conference to consider the way in which we might express in a few words the contribution of Friends towards the doctrine and practice of a Union Church, they drew up a brief statement which contains the following words under the heading of "sacraments." These words are intended to convey the essence of the Quaker position on this point.

1. "The Pre-eminence of the Spiritual Experience.

2. "The Spiritual Experience may be realized independently of any special occasion, rite, or mediating person, except our Lord.

3. "Membership of the Church of Christ is of such a character that any outward recognition fails adequately to determine it."

If the complete Christian message is to be given, if the Christian Church is to enter fully into an understanding of the mind of the Master, this aspect of truth needs to be emphasized, not only by words but by lives, and not only by the lives of individuals but by that added emphasis which comes through the existence of a corporate Body, whose very existence depends upon the validity of this tremendous fact. Our position as a Society does depend upon this truth, and out of it grow many other of our special contributions, if not all. We are set in the world of to-day to testify to a truth the enunciation of which has never been more urgently or

more widely needed. The whole Church of Christ should be sounding forth this message. *She needs, therefore, a body of persons who stand for the principle that God deals directly with every soul of man, ever challenging the spirit of man to rest in nothing short of direct personal intercourse with God.*

IV.

No one can be blind to the way in which every detail of our life is being modified by the many new inventions which accelerate the rate of living. We crowd into a single day more than our forefathers could put into a week. The express train, the telegraph and the telephone, the typewriter, the multiplied devices for saving time—all these things are speeding up life to the point at which the time for meditation and quiet is crowded out. This is surely a great and growing danger of which none of us is wholly unconscious.

I have been surprised to find in how many different circles there is at the present time a feeling of dissatisfaction with the

forms of worship which have for long been regarded as sufficiently satisfactory. I know a number of cases where, in high church circles, prominent people are feeling after something more akin to a Quaker Meeting than anything else. I am also intimately associated with some of the most living movements in my own country, in which meetings have been held on the same lines. This does not mean that great value does not still attach to regular arranged services. No doubt the vast majority of those who attend the services of the Anglican Church are still finding out that their spiritual needs are met thereby; but, there are others, and some of them are choice spirits, who feel the need of more liberty and who crave for more stillness in their worship. They are coming to recognize the great danger of the regular pre-arranged service such as is usual in most other denominations. They fear, perhaps, the invasion of the sanctuary by the spirit of rush and hurry.

Turning to the mission field, I could quote many examples which show the way

in which the Quaker form of worship appeals to some of those who are being brought out of heathenism. I think of one young man, a close personal friend of my own in China, who, having attended one or two Friends' Meetings, came to us and urged us, at a very early stage in our mission work in Chengtu, to establish a regular Friends' Meeting in addition to the ordinary mission services; and I recall with keen satisfaction the experiment which we made and the true worship into which Chinese and English together entered and the helpful and inspired ministry which arose out of it. A leading Indian Christian, describing the establishment of the National Missionary Society of India, explained to a Friend the way in which the Christians had met together for united worship, sitting as he said often as much as half an hour in silence and then breaking out, as prompted by the Spirit, into prayer and praise. "We," he said, "find this most helpful; it means a great deal to us, and we have meetings of this kind before every one of our business sessions; but," he con-

tinued, "you won't be able to understand it; it is so different from your English ways." You can imagine his surprise on being told that he had almost exactly described the way in which the Friend to whom he was speaking habitually worshiped. Not long ago I took a friend of mine to Meeting. He was a man who had spent some years in India and had become intimately associated with a number of Indian students. After Meeting he asked me if our Meetings were open to the public; because, if so, he would like to bring some of his Indian friends to Meeting, as he felt it was exactly the thing which would help them.

It seems to me that, in the forms of worship in other Churches, we have either on the one hand a united act of worship which is to some extent formal, as when the congregation joins in the singing of a hymn or in a set prayer; or else on the other hand we have an individual act which is not formal but inspired, as when a man filled with a message from God delivers it to the congrega-

tion. I know no other form of worship which fulfils my idea of a *united act inspired of God.* As we wait together upon Him we are together called into His Holy presence. The silence represents to us not merely the touch of each individual spirit with the Spirit of God; it represents rather the uniting of our spirits together in harmony with His Spirit. Thus are we privileged to understand something of that true Communion of the Saints which is to be fully experienced in the life beyond. A Friends' Meeting filled with the sense of the presence of God is, to my mind, one of the chief contributions which Friends ought to be making to the life of the Church of Christ. This ideal was well expressed by T. R. Glover in the Swarthmore Lecture.

"When it is real worship, common worship may take the individual soul a good deal further than it may go alone. We make the atmosphere for one another—courage, depression, hope, study, reflection or whatever it may be; and faith is, as a matter of fact, as liable to be helped as hindered by environment. Prayer, when it is reality,

and when it is the common activity in one place at one time of a community of like experience, may reach a higher plane than we have known before, not as a matter of mere emotion but with results that do not pass away.

"Love is reinforced by this solidarity of the Christian communion, for in it Christ becomes more real, and things are apt to be seen here *sub specie aeternitatis* in their true proportions. Such vision of reality will over and over again be translated into action and consecration. The common worship, if it is the act of all, and done in deep seriousness, passes out of the formal into the effective, with or without mystical rite or element, it becomes communion, and we understand in a new and quieter way what the early Church meant by its doctrine of the Holy Spirit. God's Spirit is not bound by our choosing, but it is possible for us to become more receptive. It is easy to see how men have come to the view that through the Church the gift of the Spirit is mediated."*

* Swarthmore Lecture, 1912, pp. 68, 69.

He has to add however, "It is, I think, right to say here that these paragraphs are an epitome of my observations and experience of the Student Christian Movement;" a statement which may well suggest to us in England that our Meetings have not been all they might have been in recent years. Although I do not consider the following statement as satisfactory as that previously quoted from the same source, I should like again to refer to the statement drawn up by the members of the Friends' Mission in West China.

"1. United worship should provide opportunities for the Spirit of God to deal individually with each worshiper as well as for each worshiper to approach to God in the way best suited to his individuality.

"2. Each individual has a ministry for the benefit of all, to be exercised in spirit, and the true worship of believers depends upon the faithfulness of each.

"3. Worship should provide an opportunity for this ministry to assume vocal form, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, who may thus use any worshiper."

I recently received a letter from one of the most prominent religious leaders in this country in which he said: "This morning I attended the Old Friends' Meeting here in Philadelphia and was much refreshed in spirit. I believe we must have more of the spirit of the Friends if we are to save North American Christianity."

If meetings such as these have a real and timely message to-day, it becomes us to see that we do not lower our ideal and that we strive to achieve it more nearly in every meeting we hold. *For the Church needs a quiet place in which its members can together hear God's voice and find afresh the message and the power to believe it. It needs to learn how to wait upon God.*

V.

One of the most notable features of the last century has been the progress of the democratic movement. Every one who has watched that movement must realize the great danger of the tyranny of majorities. It is true that this danger seems to most of us to-day a smaller one than the

danger of the tyranny of a bureaucracy or of an autocrat. But, whichever way we look at it, it does not seem that we have found the true solution. Is it not possible that the pendulum has swung too far and that we have yet to discover the highest principle upon which a State may be governed?

In the new democracies of the East there is perhaps a greater danger, owing to the rapidity with which the new ideas have spread and the lack of an understanding of the deeper principles out of which they spring. Those who have closely followed affairs in the Far East will realize with what anxious eyes Japan has been watching the democratic movement in China, and how she would have given almost anything to preserve at least the name of monarchy for China. In India and in other nations the desire for an independent government and the rule of the people is outrunning the growth in ability to fulfil such functions. The spread of democracy and the desire for national independence is making itself felt, not only in the State but also in the

young Churches in the Far East. On the one hand we have those systems of Church Government which are classed together as Episcopal, and in which the authority is vested in a comparatively few. On the other hand we have Churches which pin their faith to the old adage "*vox populi vox Dei.*"

I question whether either has found the solution to the difficulty of the young Church. In both systems there lurk dangers which can here only be hinted at.

It has often seemed to me that Friends do not realize how much they have in their Meetings for Discipline. I believe that we have here a most valuable contribution towards the solution of the difficulty at which I have hinted. We have at least an ideal which we ought to be most careful not to surrender. Let me explain a little more fully what I mean.

We meet together on the assumption that Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church and that we can trust Him to lead it. We enter upon the discussion of a difficult matter of business with the full knowledge

that many different shades of opinion will be represented in that meeting. Nevertheless, we discuss it with the confidence that the will of God will be made known to us as a Body of persons, and through the whole Body; not that is to say merely through the individual or set of individuals who act as a Cabinet, nor even through the majority of those present. We discuss the question together and we believe that, at the end of that discussion, we shall be led to a united judgment as to the wisdom of a certain course of action. That judgment may not be the opinion of any one individual in the room. It may be the opinion of the actual minority of those present; but, if we are in a true Friends' Meeting for Discipline, we come out of that room all of us satisfied that the Spirit of God has Himself determined our action and that He has, as it were, made Himself responsible for it. If we entered our Meetings for Discipline in this spirit, they would assuredly be a sacrament to every one of us. There is need for as much consecration of heart in them as in the Meeting

for Worship; and perhaps more, for it is not easy to give up one's own pet theories and prejudices. If this call to sacrifice is cheerfully accepted, our Meetings for Discipline should be of untold blessing to each of us; and thus there would be a chance for us to do our part in the solution of this most difficult problem. The end towards which we are working is the Kingdom of God—neither a democracy nor bureaucracy, but a theocracy. Here again I am encouraged by noticing in some movements with which I have been connected in recent years, a tendency to follow in certain lines the methods which Friends have adopted in their Meetings for Discipline. I refer especially to certain Missionary Conferences and Committees with which I am connected, and to my experience in the Student Christian Movement of Great Britain and Ireland. And to apply this more particularly to the conditions in the mission field at the present time: in every mission we find this restless desire for autonomy. If we truly believe that the Spirit of Christ is present in the Church itself, surely there

need be no fear in our standing aside as foreigners and leaving the Church to Him who has been the Founder of it and who is Himself responsible for its future. If, on the other hand, we leave only the ideal of government by certain Bishops specially chosen, or by a majority which can perhaps be maneuvred in the interests of a particular person or opinion, we shall indeed have grave cause to fear for the Church as it is left to itself.

To those not accustomed to such procedure this seems, no doubt, like a wild impossibility. To Friends it is a serious truth and the experience of this one Christian body has demonstrated, amid much failure at times, its entire practicability as a method of transacting business. Whether or no this method be adopted by wider circles, it is nevertheless true that *the Church needs a deeper conviction of the active presence of God "in the midst of her," not merely to inspire the individual but also to direct the counsels of the body as a whole.*

VI.

Next to the danger of materialism or practical agnosticism in the Church of Christ comes perhaps the danger of opportunism. I suppose to the end of time there will be difference of opinion on the question of compromise. That a certain element of compromise must come into human life, as it is now arranged, seems to me inevitable. Much as we chafe against it, we are bound to accept it, owing to the limitations of our existence here. To take one of many examples: I suppose there is no one of us who does not year by year contribute, through the payment of taxes either direct or indirect, to the maintenance of the Army and the Navy, and perhaps to other actions on the part of the State with which he equally disapproves. There is, however, a whole range of problems upon which opinions differ very greatly. The question to which I have made allusion—the question of Peace—illustrates my meaning perhaps as well as any. At what point are we going to make our Peace principles felt?

There are certain fundamental propositions to which every member of the Church of Christ can be found to assent. That we should love our enemies: that we should do good to those that hate us: that we should show kindness to all men: and so forth. But at what point are you going to apply these principles? We are living in a world where some kind of physical force seems to be absolutely necessary. I doubt if there are any of us who would go as far as Tolstoi in our rejection of it.

But does this mean that we must therefore accept war as a necessity of this present evil time, and therefore be prepared ourselves to take up arms, as many of our fellow-Christians think? The "practical commonsense man" sees no other course, even if his conscience do cry out at times.

To take another of the great problems which press upon us in these days, viz: the relation of Christianity to business. "Business is business" too often means that Christian principles cannot be applied to it. There are so many things a man "must do" if he is to get along at all.

"It is better to leave religion out altogether in some of these practical affairs." In non-Christian countries we constantly see the divorce of ethics from religion; and I am afraid the evil is not confined to distant lands. We all know something of the pulpit that dare not denounce the sins practiced by the wealthiest of the congregation: the minister whose tongue is tied upon sweating and overcrowding: the church-member who is zealous in the observance of religion, but lacking in his business obligations.

What a need for the thoroughgoing Christian who has ideals and maintains them in everyday life, who will not lower them to suit the exigencies of life, or the pressure of social custom, to whom expediency is a forbidden word even though its exclusion may mean the Cross!

Or turn to the great non-Christian world with which we are daily brought into contact. Here is one of the greatest problems, if not the greatest, which confronts our civilization to-day. How are we going to meet our fellow-men of other races? The

politician has his solution: the commercial man has his. What is to be the solution of the citizen of the Kingdom of God? There can only be one answer: we must go to these men as to those who are our brethren; we must see them not as wholly bad or depraved, but as those who have in them infinite potentialities, who are called into the same citizenship and the same sonship which we enjoy. We must reaffirm to-day our belief in that Light which lighteth every man, but we dare not be content at that. As our forefathers led the way in the understanding of sympathy with other races; so we to whom these still more intricate problems present themselves, must stand for the ideal, however hard it seems—the ideal of spiritual kinship and the strenuous effort to realize it in our relationship with other races; and so it comes about that the Foreign Missionary enterprise seems to be of the very essence of Quakerism, and that we find it closely akin to the great causes of Peace and Anti-slavery with which our Society has ever been identified. Is the Church of Christ playing

the part which it ought to play in regard to these matters? Is it taking the stand which it ought to take in regard to the color problem in this country, in regard to the export of spirituous liquors, and so forth? What, indeed, is to be our view of a Christian Mission College which deliberately includes in its curriculum military drill with the full paraphernalia of warfare, and this in the traditionally peace-loving empire of China? To me it seems evident that there is a great place for the Society of Friends in this movement, just because we stand upon the side of idealism in all these complicated issues.

Right along the line Quakerism ranks itself on this side. The Society of Friends, as I read its history, has stood for an idealism which is well in advance of the current practice. In the holding of our Meetings for Worship we have stood for the absolute ideal; many of our Christian brethren admit it in theory, but regard it as quite outside the sphere of practical religion. The same seems to be true as regards the Sacraments, Oaths, and

so forth. The idealist is needed as much to-day as ever he was. The moral reforms, to the achievement of which Friends have contributed so much, have been attained by men who dared to be regarded as utterly impracticable, as mere dreamers and visionaries. When slavery, for example, was knit into the very fabric of Society, when its abolition seemed certain to lead to an industrial cataclysm, Friends were not wanting who boldly said, "Whatever happens, we must liberate the slave;" and in the end the visionary was right and the practical common-sense man was wrong; and the simple secret of it all was that the visionary saw God first and his fellow-men in the light of God's will for them.

No less has it been true in business affairs that Friends have maintained the strictest standard of integrity in the face of opposition and probable loss. They recognized a higher obligation which must be obeyed whatever the consequence which faced them. And in the strength of that idealism they won their way to the respect and confidence of their fellows. In the end

they were often found to be the more practical in spite of (or was it because of?) *their unreasoning idealism.* "It was in this focussing upon moral effort that the Quakers differed most from the other sects of the Commonwealth period. Their 'views' were not novel or original. Every-one of their peculiar views had already been proclaimed by some individual or by some religious party. What was new was the fixing of their ideas into one living truth, which was henceforth *to be done*, was to be put into life and made to march."*

And to-day, if the Society is true to its past it will not lose the chance of standing on the same side for the ideal, the Christian and the only final solution of these complex problems. *The Church needs a body of men and women who will dare to be fools, unpractical, dreamers, in following the Light and who will act up to their ideals.*

VII.

Another outstanding feature of to-day, to which the Society of Friends ought to

* W. C. Braithwaite's "Beginnings of Quakerism," p. xliii.

have a special relation, is that which is spoken of as the Women's Movement. This undoubtedly expresses much more than a political or social aspiration. It corresponds in some measure to the democratic movement and indicates the stirring of spiritual aspirations. Its symptoms are seen not only in the movement for women's suffrage, and not only in Western countries. A recent book, published by the wife of one of the ruling chiefs of India, is symptomatic of great changes that are taking place all over the East. The book is a statement of the positions which are open to women in Western countries, and an urgent plea for the opening of these doors to the women of the East also. Although lacking in the realization of the difficulty of suddenly making so great a change in India, the book is well worthy of notice as indicating the stirrings of a new life among Indian women. Hardly any contrast could be imagined greater than their condition in the past and that which is sketched out for them in the future by the authoress of this book. Probably many

will have noticed that an incident in the deliberations of the Provisional National Convention of China at Nanking was the presentation of a petition from the women of that country for the granting of women's suffrage.

I was recently made vividly aware of the vast difference between the practice of Friends and that of other Christian denominations by the consideration of a report on the relations between men and women in the mission field, which was presented to a representative Missionary Conference in Great Britain last summer. The report urged that an equal share in the management of mission affairs should be given to women, and brought forward a strong array of reasons in favor thereof. It was referred to by a member of one of the largest missionary societies as "a momentous report." A lady Friend described it as "daring incursions into the obvious." The fact is that we as Friends possess the very thing which some other Churches are beginning to realize they need. A brilliant writer and prominent Free Church leader

in Great Britain has recently asked the question why, in these days of the higher education of women, should the ministry be a monopoly of the men; and we Friends echo, with the thought of Elizabeth Fry and Hannah Chapman Backhouse and many another in our minds, "Why, indeed!" To the spiritual insight and courage of our forefathers we owe it, that in the Society of Friends we can say "There is neither male nor female." I wonder if we sufficiently realize how great an heritage this is—how sacred a trust; and if we take sufficient pains to bring our message in this respect to the notice of others. If the women's movement, with all its great possibilities, is to be a contribution, as it ought to be, to the building up of the Kingdom of God, the Churches need to adopt a sympathetic attitude towards it, and to express in their own organizations their readiness to adapt themselves to meet its ideals. If they are to do this with confidence, what greater stimulus could they have than the knowledge, which few outside our borders possess, I fear, of the

uniform experience of our Society throughout its history? *The Church needs to realize with greater vividness how much the consecrated womanhood in her midst can contribute to her life, and to give women the fullest opportunity to make that contribution.*

VIII.

If the women's movement expresses, as it undoubtedly does, a spiritual aspiration, I think the same may be said with perhaps equal force of the labor movements in Western countries. That many workingmen have been practically unable to develop the higher side of their nature, on account of the conditions of labor, is generally admitted. The movement for higher wages and better conditions of work is, after all, something more than the expression of a grievance against capital. There is the deep yearning for a fuller life. This great aspiration the Churches should recognize and seek to meet. Speaking for my own country, I can say that one of the great obstacles with which the Churches are confronted in dealing with the working-

men is the suspicion of the mercenary spirit. To the workingman, the clergyman is paid to do a certain job and must justify his existence. Of course this is a prejudice which is soon removed when the man gets into such personal relations with the minister as to feel the heartbeat of a true friendship, but often these personal relationships are hindered through the prejudice referred to. Do not these facts suggest that there is a need for one section of the Church which has not this disability and whose ministers are all laymen?

And this brings me to the further thought of the need for this very testimony on the mission field to-day. The other day in India a missionary of another Society said to me, "Whatever you Friends do, do not give up your principles in regard to a free ministry," and he proceeded to quote to me a case of some well-to-do young men whose mother was an earnest Christian woman. She, it appeared, had been urged to take up regular Christian work, and they had constantly stood in the way. When pressed as to the reason for such

action, they informed the missionary that they could not allow their mother to take up Christian work because the neighbors would at once say that they could not afford to keep her; so intimately were the ideas of Christian work and the payment of a salary connected in the minds of the Indians. How often do we hear the gibe flung at Christian Missions that their converts are all "rice Christians!" The element of truth in the slander of course is this—that so many of the best are called to direct religious work for which they receive regular payment. At a conference of leading Christians held recently, a strong representation was made to the foreigners present, and through them to the home boards, to the effect that missionaries should lay greater emphasis on the calling of Christians into business life and cease to so state the problem of Christian service as to lead to the inevitable conclusion that the only place for the most consecrated Christians was the ministry. The great need, in fact, is that there should be a vast increase of voluntary workers; that the

idea of "every Christian a missionary" should permeate the whole Church, both at home and abroad. We have seen recently that wonderful results can flow when this ideal dominates the Church, as in the history of the last ten years in Korea.

Now Friends have a position of peculiar strength in this matter and one which in England has been nobly used, especially through the Adult School movement.

I am not here to say that the practice of Friends needs no modification, in view of the special circumstances either of missionary work abroad or of the conditions of a new country like this; but I do most emphatically believe that Friends have here a great testimony and one which is needed by the whole Christian Church.

I am not maintaining that there is no place for the supported minister. You in America have found for him a larger place, in the special conditions of your life, than we have among Friends in England; but, even here, I am persuaded that you recognize to the full the primary thought that a

man is not paid for his services or in proportion thereto, but that he is simply maintained in order that he may fulfil the ministry which has been entrusted to him.

Is there not also great value in the insistence upon the fact that the ministry of the Church is not dependent upon the laying on of hands, or any other outward ceremony? I should like to quote again from the West China document to which I have already referred, under the heading of "Ministry."

"1. The supreme and only indispensable qualification for the Christian ministry is the Divine call, habitually responded to. Any man or woman so used of God is thereby constituted a Christian minister.

"2. The part of the Church is to recognize such ministers."

It is not only the mere fact of his salary which makes the workingman shun the parson. It is the thought of a class set apart, different from the ordinary man in the street. Are we making full use of the advantage we possess through having our

business men engaged in the active ministry of the Church? If we have broken down the barrier between lay and cleric, have we not at the same time done something to remove the barrier between labor and the Church?

The Church, then, needs to be reminded perpetually that the ministry is not the work of a class but of all, and that the service of Christ is not a profession but a free-will offering.

IX.

There is one other direction in which my own experience leads me to believe that Friends have a position of peculiar advantage and responsibility, and I cannot close this address without making some reference thereto. We are all well aware of the great difficulties which have been faced and are still being faced by the Church of Christ to-day through the advent of the historical criticism of the Bible. On the one hand there are those who believe that the Bible should be treated exactly as any other book; that the various documents which

have been embodied in it should be critically examined and that every statement should be checked and challenged. This treatment of the Bible has led to results which many regard as serious, if not disastrous. So much is this the case that many of the most earnest followers of Christ believe on the other hand that the whole movement, generally spoken of as the "higher criticism," is altogether evil and to be resisted with the whole strength of the Church. This school, with which are associated some of the most saintly and earnest Christian workers, believes that we should maintain the entire literal inspiration of the whole of Holy Scripture. From the results which they have seen in the case of many who have been grievously upset, and whose faith seems to have been shipwrecked through following the higher critics, they have come to the conclusion that it is wrong to allow any question to be asked which might lead to the shaking of our faith in the literal accuracy of the whole book. To some it seems as though these two schools of thought could not possibly

be reconciled. They regard their opponents as hopelessly narrow-minded and bigoted or as giving away the very essence of Christian faith. But can the Christian Church afford to lose either section? It is true there may be irreconcilable extremists on both sides; but even this I should be sorry to admit. Of course, there are some who have entered upon the critical study of the Bible from a sceptical standpoint: I am not referring to these. But there are many who are truly devout scholars and who are intensely loyal to our Lord Jesus Christ; and there are many younger men and women who long to be able to maintain the faith delivered to their fathers, but who feel that, in doing so, they dare not be untrue to their own God-given reason, and who are therefore compelled to face the questions which some would counsel them to leave alone. The cure for such is not to tell them that an unorthodox view with regard to the authority of a certain book puts them outside the Kingdom of God: unfortunately there are not a few whose counsels to the young would seem to point in this direc-

tion. Can we not find a *via media* which will help us to work together in love in spite of the fact that we differ so greatly even on so important a question? If we cannot so work together I believe there must be weakness in our testimony to Christ.

I think that the Society of Friends is in a position of unique strength in regard to this difficult problem. The early Friends realized—as their contemporaries did not—that the Holy Scriptures contained the word of God; but that it was not right to speak of them as being the word of God. They realized the danger, to which the Reformers were many of them blind, of a literalism in the interpretation of Scripture which would bind men as did the tradition of the Elders in the time of Christ. Nevertheless, they held with tremendous tenacity the view that the Scriptures were indeed inspired of God, and this none the less because the same Spirit who first inspired men of old to write was present and necessary to help the men of to-day in the interpretation of those writings This view is thus expressed by Samuel Fisher:

"And because we do not, with the misty ministers of the mere letter, own the bare text of Scripture entire in every tittle, but say it hath suffered much loss of more than vowels, single letters and single lines also, yea, even of whole epistles and prophecies of inspired men, the copies of which are not by the clergy canonized nor by the Bible sellers bound up, and especially because we own not the said alterable and much altered outward text, but the holy truth and inward light and spirit to be the Word of God, which is living [and] the true touchstone, therefore they cry out against us. Yet the Scriptures are owned by us in their due place and the letter is acknowledged by us full as much as it is by itself, to have been written by men moved of God's Spirit."*

This, it seems to me, is the platform upon which all reverent scholars and devout lovers of the Bible can meet. The Society of Friends, which has ever stood for tolerance, is not the Body to hurl anathemas at those who are finding light for their path

*Quoted in "Beginnings of Quakerism," p. 289.

in ways that to some of us may seem dark and tortuous. Rather, is it not the Body which, in the true spirit of its founders, may bring us together with a tendering of spirit, as we own allegiance to one common Lord and as we recognize together the far greater dangers that confront the Church in the sin and unbelief of the world in which we live.

The Church needs to recognize that even large divergence of view in reference to the Bible is consistent with loyalty to Christ, and that we must all stand together to face the great tasks that demand her undivided attention.

X.

In conclusion, let me say a few words upon the meaning of all this to ourselves. Much that I have said to you will be familiar, and perhaps even of the nature of platitudes to many of you; but it is worth saying if it does no more than bring us all to the same point for facing the tasks that are before us to-day. We come to this point recognizing that, whether at home

or abroad, the Society of Friends is called to play a part, to make a contribution of permanent worth to the Church of Christ. I have touched upon some of the things that are included in the heritage of the past. In our Books of Discipline, in the memoirs of ancient Friends, in the lives of our own parents and grandparents we have abundant proof of our goodly spiritual inheritance; and the amazing fact that confronts us to-day is surely this—that, having so much, we are giving so little. The really pressing question is not, "What is our contribution?" but, "How are we to make it?" What a glorious heritage the Jews possessed when our Lord was on earth, and yet how many of them were content to say "We have Abraham to our father!" We need, then, first a new conviction—a conviction that what God has given to us is not only beautiful, uplifting and inspiring, but that it is true. Whence can this conviction come? It can come to us only from God Himself. The records of the past, however luminous, will not enlighten us without His Spirit. We need

to be brought into His presence, that we may see Him, as did our fathers, and have that note of conviction in all that we say and do that shall compel men to believe that what we say is true.

And, secondly, we need a new consecration. To us there may be revealed "the vision beautiful"; but only when we have said with the whole heart, "Here am I, send me," can we be trusted to bring that vision into the lives of others. If we are mere imitators of others, the ideal may seem beautiful, but it is not compelling enough for us to take up the cross and go all lengths in the service of the Master. When we draw our inspiration from Him direct, there comes into our lives that intensely personal motive which the Apostle described in the words "The love of Christ constraineth us." In this spirit of consecration to Him we shall be united with one another, and, being thus joined together, we shall be permitted to bring our message home to others as we could in no other way.

And, thirdly, we need to have a larger sympathy with those to whom we go.

It is not the passion of bigotry which will enable us to deliver our message. Let us remind ourselves again that we are one with all who love the Lord in sincerity and truth. If we expect others to understand us, let us be at least as patient in seeking to understand them. Let us beware of the sectarian spirit. Let us emphasize the fundamentals which we hold in common with others even more than our own distinctive views. The more we have to give, the more vital does it become that we should "walk humbly with our God." The spiritual pride which writes off the achievements of our ancestors on the credit side of our own balance sheet is perhaps one of the chief hindrances to our paying the debt which we owe to the Church.

And, fourthly, we need a corporate sense of our mission and message. If only each of us in this great representative gathering might be given afresh the child-like spirit, and if all together we might hear once more the call of the Master ring out clear and strong to our Society, might not even the early triumphs of Quakerism

be surpassed? A new age needs indeed a new spirit. We are not called to give just the same thing as was given by our spiritual forefathers; but we are called each and all to give our best, without stint, without counting the cost, and, unless we do, we cannot be true to that which God has given us.

Out of the dedicated spirit of the body as a whole there will be born a race of apostles. To each is given his ministry—"To some apostles." We must have such if our message is to ring forth with its ancient power and in new and living tones. It should be the peculiar task of the Society of Friends to raise up apostles. We need to travail in pain till they be born, and the pain is to be the long sorrow of a world's need which God has given us the ability to meet, and which for Christ's sake we will make our own.

When I think of these great needs around me, I can sometimes feel that the illusion lifts and "the *truth* lies bare." In the Church and beyond its borders I seem to hear the yearning cry of those who aspire

and whose aspirations are checked and thwarted: the bitter murmurings of those who have lost their confidence in organized Christianity and have been soured and alienated where they should have found sympathy and help: the warring and discordant notes of those who quarrel and misunderstand each other where they should unite firmly to represent Christ to the world: the perplexed questionings of those who seek to steer a straight course through the maze of modern life, and who have no certain guide: the weary sigh of those for whom life is too rapid and who have no time to turn inward and find their peace in Christ: the almost stifled sob of the souls that are cramped by the pressure of a materialistic view of life, or by the crushing weight of a world that leaves out God.

The call comes from far and near for sympathy, deliverance, direction, peace and courage. Through it all may we not catch the tones of One whose heart still beats with the heart of his weakest child, saying

> "My voice is crying in their cry,
> Help ye the dying lest ye die"?

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